

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSE-00 CPR-03 /067 W
-----008083 142218Z /75
R 130945Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8764

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FOR NEA/ARN SEELYE

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PDIP, US, SY
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S ARRIVAL AND PRESENTATION CEREMONY

1. TO ASSIST YOU IN PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST FEW DAYS IN
DAMASCUS, FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF SYRIAN PROCEDURE FOR
ARRIVING AMBASSADORS.

2. ARRIVING AMBASSADOR IS MET AT FOOT OF PLANE RAMP BY CHARGE
AND SYRIAN PROTOCOL OFFICER AND CONDUCTED TO VIP
LOUNGE FOR FRUIT JUICE (ABOUT TEN MINUTES). PROTOCOL
OFFICER THEN ESCORTS AMBASSADOR TO EMBASSY CAR. GSO HANDLES
BAGGAGE AND ENTRY FORMALITIES AND FOLLOWS IN SEPARATE CAR.

3 ARRIVAL STATEMENT TO PRESS IS NOT REPEAT NOT EXPECTED.
HAVING FAILED TO FIND AMBASSADOR IN LOCAL CORPS ENLIGHTENED
ON THIS SUBJECT, CHARGE ASKED CHIEF OF PROTOCOL QUDSI
DIRECTLY WHO REPLIED THAT PRESS WAS NOT NORMALLY INVITED
TO MEET ARRIVING AMBASSADORS AND ARRIVAL STATEMENT WAS NOT EXPECTED.

4. DAY OR SO AFTER ARRIVAL, AMBASSADOR CALLS ON
CHIEF OF PROTOCOL QUDSI AND RECEIVES DETAILED BRIEFING
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ON PRESENTATION CEREMONY.

5. WITHIN FOLLOWING FEW DAYS, AMBASSADOR CALLS ON
FONMIN KHADDAM AND PRESENTS COPIES OF LETTERS AND HIS
OFFICIAL REMARKS WITH ARABIC TRASLATION. FRG AMBASSADOR
DESCRIBED HIS 15 MINUTE MEETING AS SLIGHTLY STRAINED
CONVERSATION ABOUT FAMILIES, PREVIOUS SERVICE, ETC.

WITHOUT SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS BEING RAISED.

6. AMBASSADOR WAITS FOR FORMAL PRESENTATION DATE TO BE SET WHICH COULD BE A WEEK OR TWO MONTHS. SEVERAL PRESENTATIONS ARE USUALLY SCHEDULED IN SUCCESSION ON SAME DAY.

7. CHIEF OF PROTOCOL QUDSI AND MILITARY AIDE CALL FOR AMBASSADOR AT RESIDENCE AND TAKE HIM IN OFFICIAL LIMOUSINE TO PRESIDENTIAL GUEST HOUSE AT FOOT OF ABU ROUMANEH WITH 15-MAN MOTORCYCLE ESCORT. UP TO SIX MISSION STAFF FOLLOW IN EMBASSY VEHICLES. DRESS IS DARK BUSINESS SUIT FOR ALL.

8. ON ARRIVAL AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED BY STAFF STANDS FOR US NATIONAL ANTHEM, REVIEWS HONOR GUARD STOPPING IN MIDDLE TO INCLINE HEAD TO COLORS THEN CONTINUING TO GUEST HOUSE STEPS WHERE HE SHAKES HANDS WITH HONOR GUARD CAPTAIN. AMBASSADOR AND STAFF ARE GREETED AT TOP OF STEPS BY PRESIDENTIAL PROTOCOL CHIEF SAADAWI AND CONDUCTED TO PRESENTATION ROOM.

9. AMBASSADOR ADVANCES TO MARKED POSITION BEFORE PRES. ASSAD WHO IS FLANKED BY FONMIN KHADDAM AND MINSTATE MILHEM. AMBASSADOR RESPECTFULLY INCLINES HEAD THEN READS HIS OFFICIAL REMARKS IN ENGLISH OR ARABIC. PRESIDENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REPLIES EXTEMPORANEOUSLY IN ARABIC. AMBASSADOR THEN ADVANCES, PRESENTS LETTERS, SHAKES HANDS AND ASSAD PRESENTS KHADDAM AND MILHIM. ASSAD THEN INVITES AMBASSADOR TO PRESENT STAFF.

10. ASSAD, KHADDAM AND AMBASSADOR WITHDRAW TO PRIVATE ROOM FOR INTRODUCTORY CONVERSATION. FRG AMBASSADOR REPORTS THAT UNLIKE KHADDAM, ASSAD RAPIDLY DISPENSED WITH PRELIMINARIES AND OPENED SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION OF SYRIAN-FRG RELATIONS ON WHICH HE HAD BEEN WELL BRIEFED AND WHICH LASTED 30 MINUTES.

11. ASSAD, KHADDAM AND AMBASSADOR RETURN TO PRESENTATION ROOM FOR OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS, FOLLOWING WHICH AMBASSADOR TAKES LEAVE. OUTSIDE HE STANDS FOR SYRIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM THEN REVIEWS HONOR GUARD, SALUTES COLORS ETC., IN REVERSE DIRECTION FORM PARA. 8.

12 ON ARRIVAL AT RESIDENCE, IF TIME PERMITS, CHIEF OF PROTOCOL QUDSI AND MILITARY AID WILL COME INSIDE FOR GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE AT WHICH TIME MRS. SEELYE IS PRESENTED. THIS SHOULD BE ARRANGED BEFORE PRESENTATION EITHER BY TELEPHONE CALL THAT MORNING OR DURING RIDE FROM RESIDENCE TO GUEST

HOUSE. CHEIF OF PROTOCOL TAKES LEAVE AND MEMBERS OF
MOTORCYCLE ESCORT STEP FORWARD TO RECEIVE
BAKSHEESH (25 OR 50 SYRIAN POUNDS EACH) FOR THEIR ROLE
IN CEREMONY.

13. PRESS COVERAGE OF PRESENTATION IS USUALLY LIMITED
TO PHOTO AND ONE PARAGRAPH STORY AMBASSADOR IS NOT
QUESTIONED AND EXCHANGE OF OFFICIAL REMARKS IS NOT
PUBLISHED. FRG AMBASSADOR WAS ASKED BY SYRIAN RADIO TO
GIVE INTERVIEW ABOUT A WEEK AFTER PRESENTATION BUT HE
DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS IS CUSTOMARY. RADIO SENT HIM
LIST OF QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE.

14. AMBASSADOR MAY THEN BEGIN TO PAY OFFICIAL CALLS WHICH
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ARE ARRANGED THROUGH MFA OFFICE OF PROTOCOL FOR SARG
OFFICIALS AND DIRECTLY BY EMBASSY FOR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES
AND OTHERS. WHILE OFFICIALLY AMBASSADOR IS SUPPOSED TO
CONDUCT NO BUSINESS UNTIL AFTER PRESENTATION, HE MAY
INFORMALLY CALL ON AMBASSADORS OF TRADITIONALLY FRIENDLY
COUNTRIES EARLIER IF PRESENTATION DATE IS DELAYED.
PROTOCOL IN DAMASCUS IS QUITE RELAXED ON THAT SCHORE THOUGH
LESS SO ABOUT OFFICIAL DEALINGS WITH GOVERNMENT. EMBASSY
IS PREPARING LIST OF SUGGESTED CALLS FOR
AMBASSADOR AND MRS. SEELYE.
PELLETREAU

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Message Attributes

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